

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)889/09-10(06)

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Panel on Constitutional Affairs

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 10 February 2010**

Briefing by the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission

Purpose

This paper gives a brief account of the major issues raised by the Panel on Home Affairs (the HA Panel) on the work of the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) since the First Legislative Council (LegCo).

Background

2. Established under the Sex Discrimination Ordinance (SDO) on 20 May 1996, EOC is a statutory body responsible for the implementation of SDO, the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO), the Family Status Discrimination Ordinance (FSDO) and the Race Discrimination Ordinance. EOC comprises the Chairperson and up to 16 members. The authority of appointment of the Chairperson and members rests with the Chief Executive who shall determine the remuneration and the terms and conditions of appointment of the Chairperson. Under section 63 of SDO, the Chairperson shall be appointed on a full-time basis whereas other members of EOC may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis.

3. The post of the Chairperson of EOC, which has the executive responsibility for the overall operation and management of EOC, is pitched at the rank equivalent to Point 8 on the Directorate Pay Scale of the Civil Service. EOC used to have a post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) which was pitched at the rank equivalent to Point 3 of the Directorate Pay Scale, but the CEO post was deleted in July 2000. The responsibility of the CEO post was then shared between the Chairperson and the Director (Planning and Administration).

4. The Home Affairs Bureau used to be the housekeeping bureau of EOC until July 2007 when this role has been taken up by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau. In Chapter 3 of Report No. 52 of the Director of Audit tabled at LegCo on 22 April 2009, Audit has recommended that the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (SCMA) should expedite action to take forward the proposal of

separation of the posts of the Chairperson and CEO of EOC which was recommended both in the report of the Independent Panel of Inquiry on the Incidents Relating to EOC as well as the reports of two internal reviews conducted by EOC. The Administration consulted the Panel on Constitutional Affairs (the CA Panel) at its meeting on 15 June 2009 on three possible options for taking forward the proposal, namely, keeping the status quo by not reinstating the post of CEO, appointing a part-time non-executive Chairperson and a full-time CEO, or appointing a full-time CEO in addition to the existing full-time executive Chairperson. While members held divergent views on the three options, a majority of members expressed support for the separation of the posts of the Chairman and CEO of EOC.

5. The Administration has subsequently decided that the current position in respect of the Chairperson of EOC should be maintained, but the post of CEO at the level of Point 3 of the Directorate Pay Scale should be reinstated to oversee the administrative and operational matters, and to strengthen the governance of EOC. Members may wish to refer to the letter dated 3 July 2009 from SCMA to the Chairperson of EOC for the Administration's view regarding this issue in **Appendix I**.

6. Members also may wish to refer to the background brief prepared by the LegCo Secretariat on the proposal to separate the posts of the Chairperson and CEO of EOC for the meeting of the CA Panel on 15 June 2009 [LC Paper No. CB(2)1808/08-09(04)] and the minutes of that meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)114/09-10] for detailed background information relating to the proposal and relevant discussions by the Panels.

Relevant issues raised by the HA Panel

7. The HA Panel met with Ms Anna WU, the former Chairperson of EOC, at its meetings on 8 February 2002 and 14 March 2003 respectively on the work of EOC. The Panel also met with Mr Raymond TANG, the immediate past Chairperson of EOC at its meeting on 4 February 2005 when he took up the post. The major issues raised at these meetings are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Assessment of EOC's performance

8. Some members asked whether EOC had any mechanism to assess the effectiveness of its work. They suggested that targets or criteria to assess the performance of EOC should be set. Ms Anna WU explained that EOC had its own performance pledges which had set out in quantitative terms the service standard and performance target it aimed to achieve. By observing the trend of the types of complaints received, EOC could set long-term education plans on specific areas by, for example, conducting training and providing consultancy services for the Government in the hope of enhancing equal opportunities culture and value. The public's awareness of equal opportunities culture had been increased over the past years and such a change of attitude could also be considered as a target of assessment.

9. On the suggestion of setting targets or criteria to assess the performance of EOC, members noted that EOC had set certain performance yardsticks for its performance such as concluding complaint cases within six months and informing applicants of the outcome of their application for legal assistance within three months.

Provision of legal assistance

10. Some members expressed concern that EOC had to turn some meritorious cases away because of its limited funding for litigation. They asked whether EOC had cooperated with the Legal Aid Department (LAD) or law firms in providing assistance to the applicants for legal assistance. Ms Anna WU advised that the strategic approach of EOC to litigation was to support and undertake litigation on behalf of victims in significant cases in areas where clarity was required, where there was persistent discrimination, where a large number of people were involved or where public interests were affected. Cases for litigation were considered and approved by its Legal and Complaints Committee. She informed members that the annual allocation to EOC for litigation was only around \$400,000. Even though EOC had redeployed its internal funds and resources to meet the expenses of legal cases, approximately 40 to 50 meritorious cases had been turned away over the years because of budget constraints. EOC would offer legal advice to the applicants for legal assistance in these cases instead and would also refer the cases to LAD. EOC would discuss with Government the allocation for litigation as well as explore additional legal assistance that could be provided.

11. For updated information on the legal assistance provided by EOC, members may wish to refer to a paper prepared by EOC for the CA Panel in March 2009 in **Appendix II**.

Relationship with the business sector

12. In response to members' enquiries about the partnership between EOC and the business sector, and the handling of discrimination complaints arising from the recruitment exercises conducted by overseas companies in Hong Kong, Ms Anna WU explained that EOC aimed at promoting partnership with the business sector through positive means and market driven tools. For instance, EOC would approach internet service companies inviting their provision of services for persons with disabilities because this would enlarge their market share. EOC had also proposed to extend the application of the relevant anti-discrimination legislation to Hong Kong permanent residents working overseas under specified circumstances. The proposal was being studied by the Administration.

Discrimination on the grounds of age, family status and disability

13. In response to members' enquiry about EOC's view on introducing legislation against age discrimination, Ms Anna WU advised that EOC in principle welcomed the

introduction of legislation to protect the public from all sorts of discrimination. EOC had received from time to time complaints about discrimination on the grounds of age which fell outside the scope of the anti-discrimination legislation. EOC would refer those cases to the appropriate parties concerned and maintain statistics for future reference and planning.

14. Some members considered that the level of public awareness about FSDO was low. Ms Anna WU advised that EOC would continue to enhance its promotional work to raise the public awareness of FSDO and promote local equal opportunities culture through training and development of equal opportunities policy. In addition, some cases relating to discrimination on the grounds of family status and age could be handled under SDO.

15. Some members expressed concern whether persons with disabilities were adequately protected under DDO. Ms Anna WU informed members that many persons with disabilities had complained against the discriminatory practices of insurance and public transport companies. For example, they had encountered difficulty in purchasing insurance coverage for medical, travelling and life insurance etc, or were charged very high premium. EOC was conducting a research on how local and overseas insurance practices adapted to equal opportunities legislation. Upon completion of the research in 2002, EOC might be able to draw up guidelines for the reference of local insurance companies in considering insurance packages for persons with disabilities.

The role of the Chairperson of EOC

16. Some members considered that the Chairperson of EOC should have a track record of human rights work and be familiar with various international human rights treaties. In response to members' enquiries about his aspirations, Mr Raymond TANG advised that he would perform the role of the Chairperson in accordance with the law and duly perform the responsibilities imposed on him under the anti-discrimination ordinances. His ideal was to achieve a level-playing field upon which a harmonious society could be built.

17. Some members considered that the Chairperson of EOC was expected not just to implement the anti-discrimination ordinances but to have a clear vision in promoting equal opportunities. Mr Raymond TANG, however, explained that as a statutory body, EOC had its powers and functions clearly stated in the law which prescribed that the primary function of EOC was to deal with complaints on infringements on those rights protected under the anti-discrimination ordinances. The role of an advocate should be assumed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and concern groups, and EOC would work with these NGOs, concern groups and the community to promote expanding the scope of protection of any human rights which had not yet been given adequate protection within existing legal framework.

18. Members may wish to refer to the minutes of the relevant meetings of the HA Panel [LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1278/01-02, CB(2)1676/02-03 and CB(2)1081/04-05] for detailed discussion of these issues.

Recent development

19. The term of office of the immediate past Chairperson of EOC, Mr Raymond TANG, expired on 12 January 2010. On 13 January 2010, the Government announced the appointment of Mr LAM Woon-kwong as the new Chairperson of EOC for a term of three years commencing 1 February 2010. Members may wish to note that at the Council meeting on 3 February 2010, Hon Fred LI raised an oral question on issues relating to EOC including the appointment of Mr LAM. The reply of SCMA is in **Appendix III**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 February 2010

政制及內地事務局局長
政府總部



SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
LOWER ALBERT ROAD
HONG KONG

香港下亞厘畢道

本局檔號 OUR REF.: S/F (10) to CR 1/2/30

來函檔號 YOUR REF.: EOC/CR/GOV/11/01 & EOC/CR/GOV/03

3 July 2009

Mr Raymond Tang,
The Chairperson
Equal Opportunities Commission
19/F, Cityplaza Three, 14 Taikoo Wan Road
Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong

Dear Raymond,

**Separation of posts of Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)**

Thank you for your letter of 24 June 2009 conveying the views of the Members of the EOC regarding the captioned issue.

Earlier on, we have discussed the issue at the meeting of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs on 15 June. On that occasion, Members of the Legislative Council expressed diverse views. While most of the views were in favour of the separation of the posts under options (b) or (c) of the Panel paper discussed at the meeting, there were reservations about the separation of the posts, in particular over the conversion of the position of the Chairperson into a non-executive post, in that this might affect the ability of the EOC in carrying out its functions. Views have also been expressed that we would need to determine the issue before the open recruitment process for the new Chairperson.

We also note that, whilst the majority of Members present at the EOC meeting on 18 June were inclined towards option (b), there were views among EOC Members in support of both options.

After taking into account the comments received, we are of the view that at this stage, we should maintain the current position in respect of

the Chairperson, but reinstate the pre-2000 arrangement by creating a post at the level of Point 3 of the Directorate Pay Scale (D3) to oversee the administrative and operational matters and to strengthen the governance of the EOC. The position could be given the title of Chief Operations Officer (COO) to reflect the role of the post.

As to the existing role and post of the Director of Planning and Administration, as part of the duty of the post would be taken up by the new COO post, we would defer to the EOC to consider whether the position should revert to D1 level (i.e. the rank of this post before 2000).

In order not to affect the operation of the EOC, we will provide additional resources for the creation of the COO post.

Since the senior management of the EOC should function as a team, it would be advisable for the recruitment of the new COO post to be overseen by the new Chairperson when he or she takes up office.

The above arrangement would not involve any legislative amendment. It would enable the EOC to have the full-time involvement of the Chairperson at the current senior rank. It would also strengthen the administration and governance of the EOC. If, at a future date during the term of office of the new Chairperson, it is considered necessary to review these arrangements once again, we would be prepared to consider the views of the EOC, and that of other quarters of the community, at that time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Lam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

(Stephen LAM)

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Legal Assistance provided by Equal Opportunities Commission

Purpose

Pursuant to Members' enquiries in the meeting held on 16 February 2009, this Paper provides information on legal assistance provided by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) under the Sex Discrimination Ordinance, the Disability Discrimination Ordinance and the Family Status Discrimination Ordinance (the Ordinances).

Background

2. A person may lodge a complaint with the EOC in respect of an unlawful act under the Ordinances, and the EOC will investigate the complaint and will endeavour to effect a settlement between the parties¹.

3. After a complaint is lodged with the EOC, and if there is no settlement, any person who may take legal proceedings in respect of the unlawful act concerned may apply for assistance from the EOC (legal assistance) in respect of those proceedings².

4. The EOC's function of providing legal assistance under the Ordinances is distinct from other types of legal proceedings which the EOC may become involved. Where applicable, the EOC may also take proceedings in its own name under regulations made under the Ordinances³. The EOC may apply for judicial review, as it did in the case of *EOC v Director of Education* [2001] 2 HKLRD 690. The EOC may also provide amicus curiae to the courts, as it did in *Secretary for Justice v Chan Wah* [2000] 3 HKLRD 641, *Tsang Helen v Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd (No 2)* [2001] 4 HKC 585 and *Leung T C William Roy v Secretary for Justice* [2006] 4 HKLRD 211.

¹ SDO s.84, DDO s.80 and FSDO s.62

² SDO s.85(1), DDO s.81(1) and FSDO s.63(1)

³ Sex Discrimination (Proceedings by Equal Opportunities Commission) Regulation Cap.480C; Disability Discrimination (Proceedings by Equal Opportunities Commission) Regulation Cap.487C; Family Status Discrimination (Proceedings by Equal Opportunities Commission) Regulation Cap.527C

Factors considered by EOC

5. Under the Ordinances⁴, the EOC shall consider an application for legal assistance and may grant it if it thinks fit to do so, in particular where –

- (a) the case raises a question of principle; or
- (b) it is unreasonable, having regard to the complexity of the case or the applicant's position in relation to the respondent or another person involved or any other matter, to expect the applicant to deal with the case unaided.

6. The Ordinances enable the EOC to decide whether to provide assistance in each case as it thinks fit. The EOC may do so by reference to the priorities of its work. This is in line with former commissions in the UK operating under similar legislation before they were merged into a single commission⁵.

7. Applications for assistance are considered by the EOC's Legal and Complaint Committee. In deciding whether to provide assistance, the factors considered by Committee include:

- (a) Whether the case raises a question of principle;
- (b) Whether it is unreasonable, having regard to the complexity of the case or the applicant's position in relation to the respondent or another person involved or any other matter, to expect the applicant to deal with the case unaided;
- (c) The strength of the evidence;

⁴ SDO s.85(2), DDO s.81(2) and FSDO s.63(2)

⁵ For example, the former Commission for Racial Equality stated that it was "*obliged only to support cases which we consider suitable... Decisions are usually made on the basis of the strength of the case, but other factors also come into play, such as whether or not the case meets the CRE's priorities; whether the applicant already has, or could have, access to alternative representations...*" (<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/cre/legal/assistance.html>). In the UK, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission were merged into the Equality and Human Rights Commission in October 2007.

- (d) The need to establish legal precedents;
- (e) The need to enhance and sustain public awareness;
- (f) The publicity impact on EOC's work in promoting equal opportunity if legal assistance is given;
- (g) Whether the case reinforces a policy issue emphasized by the EOC;
- (h) Whether suitable and effective remedy for the applicant could be obtained through legal proceedings;
- (i) Whether assistance has been granted in another case which will achieve the same purpose;
- (j) Whether the applicant has alternative resources, including legal aid;
- (k) The attitude and behaviour of the parties during the complaint handling process.

General information

8. As at February 2009 (**Annex I**), there have been 451 applications to the EOC for legal assistance, and the EOC have provided assistance in 190 applications (42%). Out of these 190 applications, 61 applications were settled before legal action was commenced. Legal action was commenced in 69 applications. The same legal action may deal with more than one application. From the 69 applications, there have been 58 legal actions.

9. Out of 58 legal actions, 33 legal actions were settled without a trial. There have been 15 trials; 13 trials have resulted in favour of the EOC assisted party; 2 trials have not resulted in favour of the EOC assisted party.

10. The legal expenses incurred by the EOC in providing assistance have been HK\$6,778,361.25. The settlement sums or damages awarded to EOC assisted party have been HK\$24,645,404.94.

11. While pregnancy discrimination and disability discrimination in employment constitute the majority of applications made to EOC, the EOC currently pays particular attention to applications involving accessibility to buildings and facilities for people with disabilities, sexual harassment, and family status discrimination in employment.

12. With regard to the strength of evidence, the EOC takes the view that it should provide assistance only if there are good prospects of establishing the facts contended. This approach is in line with the former UK commissions⁶.

13. According to the information of the Legal Aid Department (**Annex II**), from 2005 to 2007, there were 28 applications for legal aid under the Ordinances. There were 24 unsuccessful applications and 3 refusals on means.

14. In the UK, the former Disability Rights Commission supported 47 new legal cases in the year 2004/05⁷. The former Commission for Racial Equality provided full legal representation in 1 case in 2004 and 3 cases in 2005⁸.

Funding

15. At present, under the envelop funding approach, the EOC's legal expenses in relation to giving legal assistance are absorbed in the Recurrent Account. From 2005/06 up to the present, about HK\$1.5 million is set aside each year. Should this amount be insufficient, resort can be had to the General Reserve (except for funds designated for specific purposes). The General Reserve is currently around HK\$17 million.

Equal Opportunities Commission

March 2009

⁶ For example the former Disability Rights Commission stated that it "will fund individual need cases where there is exceptional individual need or hardship, such that without DRC support it is likely the disabled person will not be able to access the justice system. However, to warrant DRC support, as with cases involving points of legal principle, the prospects of success of the case must usually exceed 60% (prospects of success will be assessed as they would be with DRC support in place)" (Guide to DRC's Legal Case Selection Priorities, March 2006, paras. 1.6 and 1.7)

⁷ Disability Rights Commission Annual Report and Accounts 2004-05

⁸ Commission for Racial Equality Annual Report 2005

Table 1: Applications to the EOC for legal assistance from 1997 to February 2009

Ordinance	No. of applications for legal assistance	No. of applications withdrawn	No. of applications under consideration	No. of unsuccessful applications	No. of successful applications [a+b+c+d]	Status of applications provided with legal assistance			
						(a) not pursued (withdrawn by assisted person/ terminated by EOC)	(b) settled before proceedings commenced	(c) Proceedings commenced	(d) in progress
SDO	172	0	2	93	77	17	27	28	5
DDO	261	2	1	155	103	28	30	37	8
FSDO	18	0	1	7	10	2	4	4	0
Total no. of applications	451	2	4	255	190	47	61	69	13

Table 2: Legal actions assisted by the EOC from 1997 to February 2009

Ordinance	No. of EOC assisted legal actions [a+b+c+d]	Status of legal actions			
		(a) Settled out of court	(b) Court ruled in favour of the EOC assisted party	(c) Court ruled in favour of the Defendant	(d) On-going
SDO	22	13	6	2	1
DDO	34	18	7	0	9
FSDO	2	2	0	0	0
Total no. of legal actions	58	33	13	2	10



法律援助署
Legal Aid Department

Annex II
LC Paper No. CB(2)2187/07-08(01)

本署檔號 Our Ref.: LA/ADM 115/37 (C) II
來函檔號 Your Ref.: CB2/BC/2/06
電話 Tel.: 2867 4521
圖文傳真 Fax: 2537 2110

BY FAX 2509 9055 (Total page : 1)

5 June 2008

Ms. Flora Tai
Clerk to Bills Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms. Tai,

Re.: Bills Committee on Race Discrimination Bill

Thank you for your letter of 27.5.2008 enquiring information about applications for legal aid under the three existing anti-discrimination ordinances.

We provide the required information for the past 3 years as follows :-

	2005	2006	2007
No. of applications	5	8	15
No. of unsuccessful applications	5	7	12
No. of refusal on means	1	2	0

Yours sincerely,

(Ms. Juliana O.Y. Chan)
for Director of Legal Aid

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LEGCO QUESTION NO. 1

(Oral Reply)

Asked by Hon LI Wah-ming

Date of meeting : 3 February 2010

Replied by :

Secretary for Constitutional and
Mainland Affairs

Question

The Government announced on 13 January this year that the Chief Executive ("CE") had accepted the recommendation of the Selection Board and appointed Mr LAM Woon-kwong, the former Director of CE's Office, as the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission ("EOC") for a term of three years. Moreover, in August last year, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of the United Nations ("the Committee") considered the report of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") in accordance with the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, and recommended in its concluding observations that the HKSAR should adopt "an equality plan with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the law and that the Equal Opportunities Commission be strengthened". In this connection, will the Executive Authorities inform this Council:

- (a) given that many civic society organizations consider that the Chairperson of EOC must have commitment, in-depth knowledge and ample experience in promoting equal opportunities, whether the authorities have assessed if Mr LAM has met these requirements; if the assessment result is in the affirmative, of the track record of Mr LAM's actual work experience in this regard; and whether the authorities have considered if he can cooperate effectively with the civic society which promotes equal opportunities;
- (b) whether they have assessed if the appointment of a former politically appointed principal official under the accountability system as the Chairperson of EOC will affect the image of EOC, which should be independent, fair and impartial, and if it will cause the public to lose confidence that EOC can handle complaints against the authorities concerned in a proactive and impartial manner; and
- (c) how the authorities interpret the Committee's recommendation that HKSAR should adopt "an equality plan with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the law and that the Equal Opportunities Commission be strengthened", and what new measures they will take to respond to this recommendation?

Reply

President,

- (a) The new EOC Chairperson was recruited through an open recruitment exercise, after the Selection Board had considered all candidates carefully in accordance with various objective criteria and made a recommendation to the Chief Executive on the suitable candidate. The relevant criteria include relevant administration and management experience, commitment to equal opportunities, vision, integrity, leadership qualities, personality, track record in public and community service, and communication skills.

Mr Lam Woon-kwong has rich experience in public administration. He possesses excellent leadership, management and communication skills and has a clear vision. Mr Lam had been the Secretary for Home Affairs. He is familiar with the work of the EOC and shows strong commitment to the relevant work. In the various positions in which Mr Lam had worked, he had to communicate and cooperate with different quarters of the community. Having considered all candidates in accordance with various objective criteria, the Selection Board considered Mr Lam to be the suitable candidate.

We believe that Mr Lam will bring with him a strong commitment to the EOC's work, and will lead the EOC to work with all sectors and strive to promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination in the community.

- (b) Mr Lam has been appointed as the Chairperson of the EOC because he is the suitable candidate. Even though he had been a politically appointed official previously, this does not affect the assessment of his suitability. We would like to emphasize that Government attaches considerable importance to the independence of the EOC. There are established mechanisms and arrangements, including relevant legal provisions and the Memorandum for Administrative Arrangements, to ensure that the EOC is independent from the Government. We believe that Mr Lam will lead the EOC to carry out its statutory functions in an impartial manner.

- (c) In the Concluding Observations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of the United Nations in August last year in relation to the report of the HKSAR under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Committee recommended, among others, "the adoption of an equality plan with a view to

ensuring the effective implementation of the law and that the Equal Opportunities Commission be strengthened”. We would like to emphasize that the Government is prohibited from practising racially discriminatory acts in the exercise of its functions under the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance. The Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO) also binds the Government in all the areas that it specified, such as employment, education and provision of services. Hong Kong has an extensive framework to deal with complaints against government departments. Any racially discriminatory act of the Government is also subject to the supervisory jurisdiction of the judiciary. In addition, we are putting in place a set of Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality to provide guidance to concerned bureaux, departments and public authorities to promote racial equality and ensure equal access to public services in key areas concerned. We are collecting the views of relevant organisations with a view to implementing the Guidelines and the checklist of measures as soon as possible.

As regards the EOC, we have provided extra resources to it for the implementation of the RDO. These include a special subvention of \$7 million for making preparatory arrangements such as conducting public education, publicity and promotion, and an additional subvention of \$5 million in the 2009-10 financial year for recruiting additional staff and organising community activities to implement the RDO and promote racial equality. We will continue to provide sufficient resources to the EOC to carry out its duties as necessary.